

R. Duffield (Jr)

*14/4/10.82.
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THE
Hidden Secret Revealed:

BY WAY OF SUPPLEMENT

TO

Duffield's Authentic and Undisputed Narrative
of the Singular and Surprising Conduct of

Sir Watkin Lewes, Knight, Lord Mayor of London

RESPECTING HIS

Detention and Concealment of an Old Latin Deed,
delivered to him near Seventeen Years ago, for the
Purpose of making out and establishing the Title
of a Poor Person in Pembrokehire,

TO THE LARGE ESTATE

OF

THOMAS JAMES SELBY,

Late of Wavendon, in the County of Bucks, Esq.

Who Died in the Year 1772 :

WITH

ANIMADVERSIONS

ON THE BASE TREACHERY OF

JOHN LLOYD,

Late of No. 24, now of No. 2, Lincoln's Inn Old Buildings,

The Plaintiffs Counsel in a Cause in the Exchequer,

against the said Sir Watkin Lewes,

for recovery of the said Deed.



TO THE
P U B L I C,

FOR the information of those who have not read the original pamphlet, it will be necessary to introduce the case, but without repeating the evidence; for the most negligent perusal of these sheets cannot fail to compel a tacit admission from stubborn prejudice itself, that the wilful, fraudulent, and treacherous concealment of the deed is shewn by such marks of certainty as have hitherto been deemed sufficient to establish truth.

I shall confine my present observations chiefly to the delinquent, Sir Watkin Lewes, and one other accomplice, whose opportunities to do mischief are more frequent, and of course an exposition of his villany will be more interesting to society; and whilst the public cannot sufficiently abhor their baseness, they cannot less despise and ridicule their weakness and folly, in expecting and depending that inferiority of station and obscurity of the injured would afford them certain secrecy and safety, or in fancying that any other consequences than shame and contempt could ultimately result from such detestable treachery.

JOHN DUFFIELD.

No. 6, Gray-street, Manchester-Square, May, 1793.

(C A S E .)

THOMAS JAMES SELBY, late of Wavendon, in Bucks, Esq. (who died in the year 1772) by his Will, devised a large estate to his heir at law, when discovered; but in case no heir at law could be found, then he gave the said
B estate

estate to William Lowndes, of Winslow, Esq. the present possessor thereof, on condition of his changing his name to Selby; but the said William Lowndes, instead of performing his duty as a faithful trustee, and finding the heir hath for many years past employed David Painter, an attorney at Pembroke, as his agent, in that particular county where he knew the right heir lived, to search for and gather up every information that might tend to discover the heir to the said estate, and secrete and conceal it, particularly church registers, the mutilated parts of the most material entries of the Selby family, the said agent's clerk hath actually acknowledged to have seen; but one Henry Pugh, a very ancient man, who when a boy lived servant with a Mr. Lloyd of Trevigin, an eminent attorney and brother-in-law to Thomas Selby, of Nevern, in Pembrokeshire, farmer, long since deceased, remembering to have heard that James Selby, a son of the said Thomas Selby, was an articled clerk to the said Mr. Lloyd his uncle, and ran away from him, and married and settled in Bucks, and was very prosperous; and remembering likewise to have heard, that some deed had been formerly executed between Mr. Selby of Wavendon aforesaid, and the Selbys of Nevern, or Lloyds of Trevigin aforesaid, said he thought it likely to be found amongst the family deeds of Mr. Lloyd, then of St. Dogmels, near Cardigan.

In consequence of this information, in the year 1776, a Latin deed was there found, wherein the names *Jacobus Selby* and *Margaritta Wells* were often repeated; and it having appeared by the Wavendon register, that a *James Selby* and a *Margaret Wells* had been married at Wavendon, in the year 1655: a period which rendered it highly probable that they were the same persons named in the said deed. Sir Watkin Lewis being then at Cardigan, the deed was carried to him, who, in the presence of several persons, then and several times since (as hath been fully proved on oath) declared, that the aforesaid names were often written therein; and that by virtue of that deed he would recover the said estate for one of the descendants of the said Thomas Selby of Nevern; yet he wickedly and falsely said in his answer to a bill filed against him for its production, that he told Mr. Lloyd that he might as well have bought so much waste paper.

Several relations of the family, in full confidence of the repeated promises of the said Sir W. Lewes, at their joint expence,

expence, sent an agent to London to obtain the said deed and commence a suit, and which suit, after numerous promises of the said Sir W. Lewes to deliver up the deed without fail, was commenced, in full expectation that the said deed would be produced; but after the said agent had been above two years in London, the suit was discontinued for want of the said deed, during which time it having been discovered that the said Sir Watkin Lewes had, at several different times, given a few guineas each time to the said agent. Some other persons took several journeys to London to obtain the said deed; by all which means the expenditure of some hundred pounds was occasioned to these poor people, who, to the number of ten or eleven persons, are ready to verify these facts, and ascertain on oath their respective expenditure on that account; amongst whom is the eldest son of the late Thomas Selby and Wife, who are said to have both died with grief, they having been quite ruined by the false promises of Sir Watkin Lewes.

In Hillary term 1784, John Duffield (being much money out of pocket) by virtue of a letter of attorney, filed a bill in the exchequer against the said Sir Watkin Lewes, for a production of the said deed; when, after his rebellious contempt of the laws of his country had been repeatedly recorded, and after he had paid the costs of a sequestration, by means of the vile treachery of the plaintiff's counsel hereinafter described, the said Sir Watkin Lewes eluded the charge, notwithstanding his solicitor had declared that his own counsel, Mr. Scott (now Sir John Scott) frowned upon his brief, and angrily urged the necessity of delivering up the deed.

On the 5th of September 1785, the plaintiff left at the defendant's house the first pamphlet, and on the 19th of October following, he casually met the defendant near his own house, with another man with him, when the defendant told the plaintiff that he must talk with him then or at some other time; and the plaintiff replied, "now, by all means;" on which they went up stairs, and the defendant taking the pamphlet out of his pocket, asked the plaintiff if it was written by him; to which the plaintiff answered, that he was the author. The defendant then abused Wm. Lloyd, the owner of the deed, saying (to the reverse of what was true) that he was a lying villain, and was dependent on his bounty, and that it was in his power to send him to gaol at any time; and doubling his fist said, that the deed was

witnessed by Selby, and that the estate belonged to Lord Aylebury; and told the plaintiff he would bring an action against him and bring him to shame; to which the plaintiff replied, that his resolution was rivetted at his very heart; that he would get more proofs, and would make additions: on saying which, a sulky tameness ensued, and he nor the other person present making any answer, in about a minute the plaintiff came away.

On the 18th of July 1786, the plaintiff left at the defendant's house (enclosed as before) another pamphlet, containing some of the affidavits; and on the 28th of September following, he left two with two of his friends.

On the 11th of October, he left one at his house, containing all the affidavits.

On the 17th, he met the defendant on Holborn Hill, who in a guilty low voice told the plaintiff that he should very soon hear from him; and the plaintiff told him, that he did not believe a single syllable he said; but that he was sure that he (the defendant) believed every thing the plaintiff told him, and added, that on the morrow he would most assuredly hear further of him; and the people stopping to listen, he suddenly went on.

The next day the plaintiff left some of the pamphlets at several coffee-houses where the defendant and his acquaintance were said to resort; and hearing nothing from him, on the 28th, the plaintiff made an indiscriminate distribution of the pamphlets, which he continued at intervals for a long time afterwards.

When a watch, or other property, is found on a footpad or house-breaker, and he is asked how he came by it, nothing is more common than to answer, I found it; but Sir Waikin has reversed the plea; and being asked how he disposed of the deed, he answers, I have lost it. These two excuses are both equally unsatisfactory, and the former hath been often so much suspected, that rigorous austere treatment hath produced a confession; and there seems no reason to doubt that the same cause would produce the same effect with the latter excuse. But it hath been said, that the defendant having been so hardy as to swear the deed to be lost, it cannot be expected that it will ever be produced. However, it is not the parchment, but the purport and effect of the writing it contains which can give efficacy to the business; and it is apprehended that enough of that can be proved, as far as oral testimony can evince, and beyond

beyond controversy, as will link the Buckinghamshire and Pembrokeshire Selbys together; for such proofs can now be obtained in much greater abundance than was at first imagined.

When the person who found the deed was under examination, the defendant came to the office and asked him questions in a loud angry voice, and said he should be examined by commission; on which Mr. Watts, the examiner, informed Sir Watkin Lewes, that was the proper place to examine witnesses, and that no person had a right to ask a witness any question there but himself: and the witness afterwards declared, that he was so much afraid that Sir Watkin Lewes would do something revengeful against him, that he did not mention the most material part of what he intended to prove: the said Sir Watkin having told him before he went to be examined, that he would send him and that old rascal Duffield to Newgate.

As what Sir Watkin Lewes had said concerning the deed was notorious; in the country it is evident that his defence was not founded on a hope of escaping discovery, but on a confidence of resisting coercion by a multitude of corrupt adherents, and eluding justice by such lawless attempts to confound and intimidate.

But the very suggestion of old Pugh, of some family compact between the Selbys of Wavendon and the Selbys of Nevern in Pembrokeshire, and finding it in the very family and place he directed to search for it, added to the admission of the defendant's answer, *that the name Selby was in the deed*; and likewise, by his own letter (proved as an exhibit) owning that the deed was *executed* by Selby alone, — afford an irresistible proof of the existence of such a deed between those families, even if the registered marriage of James Selby and Margaret Wells, at Wavendon in 1655, had not been discovered: and the Wavendon and Pembroke's evidence corresponding strictly in time, and other circumstances of this deed, shuts out every possibility of conceiving that such a particular conformity and concurrence of facts could be the mere fortuitous events of chance, or the random imaginary conjectures of old Pugh, without some reality to produce them.

*Animadversions on the base Treachery of John
Lloyd, late of No. 24, now of No. 2, Lincoln's
Inn Old Buildings, the Plaintiff's Counsel.*

THE said JOHN LLOYD, in order to prevail with the Plaintiff to * strike the cause out of the paper unnoticed (with a manifest intention to subject him to the defendant's costs) said that the possessor of the estate had passed a fine, and taken every measure requisite for barring all claims whatsoever; and that the defendant had rightly said that the deed was as useless as *waste paper*; and added, that he was concerned in a foreclosure of the estate for Mr. Lowndes, and that he knew it impossible to recover it: but had he known that to be the case, it might have been expected that he would have acquainted his client with it before he had incurred so heavy an expence; yet when the cause was hourly expected to be called on (and never the least hint of the kind before) he gave his client this wise information; which, whether true or false, is a self-accusation, superlatively ridiculous, and scarce one remove from idiocy itself.

He likewise endeavoured to discourage his client, by saying that the evidence of William Lloyd, the owner of the deed, was inadmissible: but if the deed was as useless as waste paper (as he as well as the defendant contended) what interest could a man have in the production of a useless deed? So that, had he been the party claiming the estate (which he was not) the insisting that he was interested in bringing forth the deed, is to admit its utility and importance, and consequently amounts to a full confession of guilt from the defender of so absurd a position.

The next formidable obstacle with which he endeavoured to intimidate his own client, was by saying that the *Exhibit* being a letter of the defendant's own writing, confessing the deed to be executed by Selby, was strongly in favour of the defendant, because, says he, it likewise shews that the deed was not in the defendant's custody, by his desiring Mr. Jones to search for it in Wales; and had there been any appearances of the defendant's sincerity, the argument is here-

* This advice was soon condemned by those who are known to be superior to influence or temptation.

fragile: but it owes its force to a supposition for which there is not the least foundation; for, to allow any weight in the argument, it must be supposed that the defendant had no intention to deceive. The contrary of which was strongly suspected at the time that letter was written: and which his evasive answer now concurs with the depositions to make manifest and place beyond dispute; and of course the argument falls with the preposterous supposition on which it is built.

It is true, this drowsy oracle is not in the highest estimation for sagacity and penetration; yet he can scarcely be denied sufficient discernment to perceive the defendant's design of deception so very evident; and therefore it may certainly be concluded that he was less stupid than wicked on this occasion, though, from what hath been already noticed, it is hard to say which of the two old concomitants is in him the most predominant: and to say what he did not think, or to think what he dared not say, equally indicates the visible influence of abject servility and adulation.

Such was the rhetoric of this mercenary hireling of corruption! such are the specimens of the naked, undisguised poison which fell from his prostitute tongue!

These bungling strokes of treachery are not even plausible; they disgrace the worst of sophistry, and can be mentioned only to be despised for their weakness, and ridiculed for their inefficacy; for they justify more than suspicion that the bill was designedly brought in the name of the plaintiff, and not in the name of his principal, for the purpose of furnishing a specious or solid objection against it; and the cause now appears to have died black before it was born; but if that was really an insuperable obstacle, and such as he thought warranted his positive refusal to open the cause, or part with his brief and fee to another, why did he suffer it? or why did he not remove it instead of taking measures which he knew to be utterly unavailing? Could the shadow of a reason ever exist for lavishing his client's substance in a sham attempt to rectify an incurable evil by a pretended amendment of a bill which he knew to be totally useless, and to admit of no improvement? Could the striking out and withdrawing part of the charge which to this hour hath the strongest appearances of probability, have the most distant tendency to obviate the objection that the bill was brought in the name of the plaintiff, and not in the name of his principal? And could the plaintiff be thought

thought to conceive it possible, that a man who is now a Welch judge would advise a mock amendment, and put him to the expence of bringing witnesses above 200 miles to support a cause which he had predetermined to refuse to open, upon the ground of the insufficiency of the bill; after he had botched, settled, and signed it? Can he be imagined not to know that what is wrong *ab initio*, what is fundamentally wrong can never be consequentially right? And could he have any other inducement to such monstrous incongruity, but to prey upon his own client, disable his efforts, and give succour and assistance to his adversary, by creating a large expence for that purpose, and to increase his own fees? And to reconcile this with common honesty must be the task of that wonderful sagacity sprung, forced, and fertilized on the prolific dunghill of corruption.

But surely wickedness and absurdity were never more intimately associated than in this mock amendment. It is wicked, because it treacherously loads his own client with a heavy expence without a possibility of being of any service to him; and it is so evidently absurd, that it hath not even an appearance of justice, propriety, or necessity; and, what is not more or less proper, ought not to be done at all, for absolute negation hath no degrees. And if the certainty of a fact, for the doing whereof the consent of the court was necessarily applied for cannot be called in question, such deliberate perfidy can scarcely be matched in the meanders or dark recesses of the most abandoned iniquity. And to suppose there was no incitement to this marvellous conduct, is to suppose an effect without a cause, an action without a motive, without gratifying any passion, without serving any purpose, for no reason and to no end: repugnancy too glaring not to leave the corrupt cause conspicuous, and without an alternative. But here the darling work of accumulation superseded all other considerations, wholly engrossed his savage soul, and rendered him insensible of reprehension! — And may his venal acquisitions, the spoils of helpless weeping innocence, add infamy to conscious guilt, and sink him down to ignominious darkness, then will he move in his proper sphere; the perversion of Nature's rules will cease, and her wise precepts will be then obeyed.

Is not his nefarious attempt to subject his own client to the defendant's costs, by endeavouring to persuade him to strike the cause out of the paper unnoticed, a crime which might crimson the callous cheek of an house-breaker? for
surely

surely nothing can surpass in turpitude such detestable treachery, which, in its operation, effect, and consequence, seems equal to the forging a will: and with whatever palliatives the force of modern complacence may soften the crimes of this Welch judge, yet the truth, the plain honest truth, is, That he who meditates and contrives the means of robbing with impunity, is not less a thief than he who is executed at the front of Newgate. And as thefts to gratify the inordinate cravings of avarice are more odious than those to pacify the present pinchings of hunger, what must that man's reflections suggest to him who may chance to behold a Welch judge the finishing efficient of a Robbery of Yearly Thousands, passing the death-sentence on a starving sheep-stealer, without one brotherly sigh, one relenting tear, or sympathizing sob of pity and concern! He would surely less applaud his calmness than condemn his insensibility: and were he to give way to the sentiments which naturally arise on a comparison of the stations and criminality of the punished and unpunished delinquents, must he not shudder at the public danger? And must not the real gentleman (who unfortunately happens to be joined with him as a colleague in office) feel himself mortified and disgraced by the cruel supposition of equality with a wretch for whom no language can afford an epithet adequately detestable?

The plaintiff conceived from the express words in the writ of sequestration, that it ought to have continued in force until the defendant had put in a full and perfect answer; but not being competent to judge for himself, he only told his solicitor his apprehensions of the impropriety of discharging it until a full performance of its conditions, and directed him to consult with and be guided by the said John Lloyd his counsel, trusting that he would protect him against any injurious infraction of the established rules; but here, as in all other instances, this purchased slave to venality, prone to vice, and eager to partake the alluring baits of criminality, was uniform in his perfidy, and betrayed his client to give aid to a combination formed by villany, and cemented by interest.

And since the trap of treachery is the net in which this Welch judge hath been accustomed to catch gudgeons, it is pity its hemp had not been used for a better purpose, as one happy example would compel by fear what ought to be practised by principle, make the treacherous tremble, and awe the base villain into shame; but wickedness rooted

at the very heart, is permanent as poison in the nature of serpents; and to eradicate inherent turpitude, or separate qualities with nature conjoined, is as impossible as to disunite matter and solidity, ice and cold.

But how is all this the subject of wonder? Is he not distinguished by low habits and vulgarity of sentiment! Is not brutality of manners legible in every action, every gesture of his body! yet the wisdom of nature in her well adapted design is conspicuous; but the placing such a plodding lump of vicious dulness at the bar, evidently formed for the anvil or the hod, seems to have been one of the wanton frolics of fortune to pervert nature's intentions; and when the plaintiff came to see his solicitor's choice of a counsel, he was never more disappointed and dissatisfied.

The plaintiff now finds that it was known to the most inferior of the profession, that the bill was contaminated in its first formation by not being brought in the name of the principal; and it cannot be said that this was a sudden start of error, and that the glimmering perceptions of this Welch judge deceived him, and that he was thus ignorant in spite of experience at one gloomy interval, because its continuance without correction, shews it to be a meditated deliberate design; and the enormity of the offence will best appear by considering what is included in it.

1st. His moving the court for the deceptive purpose of a pretended amendment of a bill which he knew to be utterly useless, was an insult to the dignity of the court; and the motion itself affords an irresistible proof of the certainty of the fact.

2^{dly}. His receiving several fees for advising, settling, signing, and moving, for this pretended amendment, was a cheat upon his client, and a fraudulent acquisition to himself.

3^{dly}. It was an injurious deceit upon his client, to the amount of all his subsequent costs.

4^{thly}. It was manifestly calculated treacherously to prevent the production of the deed, and withhold the means of recovering an estate of several thousand pounds a year to its right owner.

5^{thly}. It is equally manifest that it was partaking with and endeavouring to shelter and protect a criminal, for whose detection and punishment he might be thought to be pecu-

peculiarly solicitous, if he was capable of acting in conformity to the duties of his present elevated station.

Add to this the prevailing opinion of the people in the country, that the deaths of Thomas Selby and his wife, and the distresses of their orphan children, mentioned in the original pamphlet, are wholly to be imputed to the vile deceit and treachery in support of a nefarious confederacy; and the guilt must appear of the most atrocious kind.

This is the unexaggerated nature of the offence; but whether treachery, fraud, deceit, and cheating, intitle the culprit (if indicted) to the pillory, fines, imprisonment, suspension, total disability from the exercise of his profession, or whatever else is best known to practisers of the law.

Shame often remains where virtue is quite lost; and those who think themselves above the reach of infamy, are sometimes startled at the imputation of absurdity; but in this case, where the defendant and his hardy Welch judge accomplice have lost all regard, even for their intellectual reputation, and attack reason and common sense with an artillery of the most despicable nonsense (their situations considered) the consequences are truly alarming; and therefore it is humbly suggested to the legislature, whether a criminal breach of trust so compendiously ruinous as to sweep away large estates by a single act of treachery, doth not require some new and rigorous restraints, as well on aiders and abettors as on principals; and whether some such provision might not greatly tend to disabuse the law, and lop off and prune away the cankered excrescences of that honourable profession?

Low quibbling evasion is a reproach to national justice, and is the constant refuge of insolence and corruption, and must ultimately stamp shame on its espousers; and if the facts herein stated are true, it must be acknowledged with the utmost indignation, that an honourable court of record hath been insulted, the ruin of innocent individuals treacherously attempted, and of course the public safety endangered; but if these facts are false, the plaintiff desires no quarter from any man that can prove them so; and to shew that he hath no desire to shun or elude an enquiry, he hath subscribed his name hereunto. being well satisfied that the whole dangerous gang would be effectually broken and routed by a candid enquiry; and that in a matter so ruinously criminal, and its detection and punishment so apparently

rently conducive to public safety, all partial considerations will be thrown aside as unworthy of regard, and every passion will be seen to give way to the desire of justice and the love of truth, that fair patroness under which the plaintiff seeks redress for principal and self ; and doubts not that one gentleman in particular will be roused by a recollection of the laudable motives by which his zeal in the cause was originally kindled.

JOHN DUFFIELD.

On the 13th of August 1789, the following Advertisement was inserted in the GENERAL ADVERTISER :

“ TIME IS THE UNERRING TEST OF TRUTH.

“ Shortly intended for Publication,

“ THE Hidden Secret fully Revealed, by way of Supplement to Duffield's authentic and undisputed Narrative of the singular and surprising conduct of Sir Watkin Lewes, Knight, respecting his detention and concealment of an old Latin Deed, delivered to him for the purpose of making out and establishing the title of a poor person in Pembroke-shire, to the large estate of Thomas James Selby, late of Wavendon, in the county of Bucks, Esquire, who died in the year 1772 ; with Animadversions on the base treachery of John Lloyd, at No. 2, Lincoln's Inn Old Buildings, the plaintiff's counsel, in a cause in the Exchequer against the said Sir Watkin Lewes, for recovery of the said Deed. A charge authenticated so far beyond controversy, that the author defies the most hardy advocate to maintain his vindication, or to deny that one deliberate fact therein (which proves itself) incontestably manifests a disposition which includes a qualification for every species of fraud and treachery ; and exclusive of his other infamous conduct therein recited, every man, on viewing the fact alluded to, must start with horror at the public danger, on finding, with uncontrovertible

vertible certain turpitude, the most abject servility and prostitution, in a station where untainted integrity ought always to reside, since every professed advocate, who hath a secret treacherous interest opposite to that of his client, is a lurking enemy to society, and his life is a misfortune to the community; proportioned to his opportunities and temptations to deceive and betray, he lives only to embarrass and burthen the public, to prey upon the helpless, filch, pilfer, and devour the product of his country, without contributing to its cultivation, defence, or ornament; and the nefarious exertions of treachery demonstrated to have been employed to shelter the defendant (did not numerous other facts render it wholly superfluous) give a certain confirmation to his guilt also.

“ It is said, no man is justified in divulging truth which tends to deprive another of an honest living; and if the same is to be understood in respect of a dishonest living, on that general coercive principle, those intitled to large possessions, forcibly withheld, seem subject (under the terrors of compulsive silence) to be condemned to servitude and beggary by perfidy, which may involve thousands in undeserved misery, and torture their distant posterity with the repining reflection, that though born to plenty, they inherit only the mournful calamities of injured innocence, not for any fault of their own, not for any crime of their ancestors, but only because their progenitors were unable, without help, to repel the violence of perfidious wickedness; and because it was deemed criminal to tell the truth, though not a single felony, with all its tragical outcries of consequent misery, can be found to produce mischiefs more lastingly ruinous and deplorable: but it is hoped it will be remembered, that the man, who in his public capacity, gets a dishonest living by practices disgraceful to his profession, and contrary to the well-being of his country, can deserve no kindness; and, that all regard for his welfare, as opposed to general good, is hostile to society, and destructive of the sacred bands by which it holds together.

“ As the Animadversions are comprized in one sheet, and carry with them indisputable evidence of joint guilt, Coffee-house-keepers may have a manuscript copy signed by the author, with an original pamphlet to which they relate, to preserve for general perusal, until the whole can be printed, by applying as in the margin, without expence; and a perusal there is free to all.

“ I John

" I John Duffield, the author, confident that the honourable profession will spurn with indignation at such reproachful practices, and equally confident that the public must ultimately profit by the present hazard of my personal safety, will trample danger, and cheerfully trust my fate to the benevolence of my country; and, if on a clear disquisition, their conduct shall be justified, then let me neither expect nor find lenity or mitigation.

" JOHN DUFFIELD.

" *No 6, Gray-street, Manchester-*

Square, August 5, 1789.

" N. B. The Animadversions were sent to the said John Lloyd, the 27th of November last; and as Sir Watkin Lewes was complimented with the first pamphlet long before the distribution, so he and the said John Lloyd have had timely notice of this advertisement."

On the insertion of this advertisement, John Lloyd went to the printer, and threatened him and Duffield with an action; but fear and conscious guilt gave check to his resentment, and no action was brought.

On the 11th of June 1790, being a few days before the election of members of parliament for the City, a copy of that advertisement, and the substance of what precedes it, were sent to Sir Watkin Lewes, to try if any thing would restore him to his reason, and induce him to deliver up the deed; but it was far from Duffield's intention to print it before the election was over, because as he wished to act upon a right principle, so he was solicitous to avoid the imputation of courting assistance from the jars of opposition, and availing himself by a vindictive spirit of resentment, and resolved by a repetition of his former indulgences, to testify to the world his unwillingness to preclude the worst of criminals from an opportunity of reformation, if he chose to embrace it; but now finding his voracity too predominant to be subdued by reason and tenderness, he considers it his indispensable duty to society to drag these two irreclaimable monsters into open day-light.

It might reasonably have been thought, that one whose rebellious contempt of the laws of his country had been repeatedly

peatedly recorded in an honourable court of equity, would, from such specimens of sedition, have been judged of all men the most improper to have a share in the enactment of laws for the support of authority and the enforcement of obedience and submission from the stubborn and refractory, since there could be no reason for disbelieving without a search what would have been readily found on record. Nor is it matter of less surprize that the same delusive confidence which made him a legislator, also conferred on him a military appointment, without considering that courage, honesty, fidelity, and conformity to law are the great martial requisites and straight avenues to safety; and never once recollecting that passive silence and inaction for years together, to a charge, public, criminal, and atrocious, mark a cowardice as disqualifying for a soldier as contumacy for a senator: and the remaining unvindicated, and without the least attempt of vindication, equally impeaches his honesty as his past and present rebellious sedition and resistance of the law destroy the very idea of fidelity; so that his benefactors, under a notion of rewarding some imaginary invisible merit, are enabling a seditious rebel to resist coercion, and stifle his fraudulent transactions; and are undesignedly breaking down the fences which bar out anarchy and rebellion. But it is apprehended that the time nearly approaches when the public will be undeceived; and those who weakly fancied that all the four props on which they rested their safety were of sound heart of oak, will find, in one instance, that they have been deluded, and partly placed their reliance on a base degenerate *fur*, which, like the misseletoe (aptly termed the lycophant plant) sucks all its nourishment from other stocks.

On the 6th of June last, 1792, Richard Davies of Uxmaeston, in Pembrokehire, carpenter, and Mary his wife, late Mary Selby spinster, and Elizabeth Selby of the same place, spinster, filed a bill against William Lowndes Selby, Esq. for recovery of the estate of the said Thomas James Selby, late of Wavendon in Bucks, Esq. The said defendant Lowndes Selby, knowing that the plaintiff's witnesses are very ancient, in hopes to avail himself by their deaths, he did not put in his answer until the 11th of February last, just before his last three weeks peremptory order for time expired: And Sir Watkin Lewes being made a defendant to the said bill, and again put to the trial of resisting the laws of his country on the same criminal detention of the deed, hath been upwards of seven months in contempt and rebellion
against

against the laws of his country ; and having assigned over his estates, it cannot be found that he hath any unincumbered property to answer the costs of a sequestration ; and knowing that if he answers the bill, and again denies the truth, he will be contradicted, and compelled to produce the deed, it is evidently a concerted design between him and the defendant Lowndes Selby, that he may, if possible, escape answering the bill at all, and thereby still keep the deed concealed ; for as that would obviate the occasion for most of the witnesses, they dread the deed more than any thing, as they depend that the poverty of the plaintiffs would prevent many witnesses being examined ; and by his parliamentary privilege he holds the plaintiffs at defiance, expecting that by a long delay, the ancient witnesses will most of them be dead ; which is acting on a principle so glaringly roguish and iniquitous, that no man would incur the reproach of such infamy from any other motive than that of avoiding corporal punishment,—and which, it is suspected, he hath strong reasons to be afraid of. And as this vile conduct manifestly indicates a fraudulent intention, it of course involves the defendant Lowndes Selby in the guilt, because the fraud committed by means of the concealment of the deed is practicable with no other person, so that the guilt of one is the guilt of both, and in which the before-mentioned John Lloyd is a partaker : and though the defendant Lowndes Selby, in opposition to all these powerful and convincing appearances, hath made a feeble effort to destroy the belief of a confederacy, by absolutely swearing that he doth not know Sir Watkin Lewes *by sight*, yet, that serves only to give a needless confirmation to what could never be doubted. And he forgot that the oath of a confederate, denying a knowledge of his accomplice, will go a every little way towards gaining credit at any time, but more especially when opposed to a seven years silent confession of a charge infamous, detestable, and public, whence all the boasted charms of lovely innocence and brilliant beauties of unspotted truth and integrity must fade, and be sullied with the filthy scum of fraud, deceit, and treachery, however three persons at least can speak to that subject ; which though of itself serious, makes the matter rather laughable.

One Lewis James having repeatedly confessed to different persons that he had obtained and mutilated the Nevein register, and boasted that *he had got the first fruits* (as he called it) ; and his wife having said *that he had got the start*
of.

of all others ; and those confessions being confirmed by several leaves and parts of leaves appearing to have been cut out of the book, he was made a defendant to the said bill ; and fearing to live in contempt of the laws of his country, chose—not to live at all ; and a day or two before he would have been served with a subpoena to appear and answer the said bill, he was found dead in a field near his own house.

A short time before his death he was frequently speaking to different persons of Sir Watkin Lewes ; intimating a confidential and reciprocal privy with the transactions of each other in relation to the affairs of the said Selby family, calling him his dear friend Sir Watkin Lewes ; and saying, that had he not been an honest man, he might have been as well rewarded as another person ; alluding (as was understood by all to whom he said so) to Sir Watkin Lewes ; and saying that he had large offers for his papers ; and speaking of meetings he had with him and the relations of the Selby-family about seventeen years ago, the time Sir Watkin Lewes first began to prevaricate and retract what he had before often said concerning the said deed ; which, with a variety of other circumstances, afford ground for suspicion that Sir Watkin Lewes was an abettor, and accessory to the felony of surreptitiously obtaining and mutilating the said register ; for it is conceived that the holding a written correspondence with the felon on the subject of the felony, hath a strong tendency to criminate or at least warrants a suspicion, especially as letters from the said Sir Watkin Lewes to the said Lewis James about the Selby affairs, were produced by the said Lewis James in his lifetime, who, in the presence of a person now in London, held out a bundle of papers to a man with whom he was talking about the Selby affairs, saying, “ These are letters from my *dear friend Sir Watkin Lewes* :” and he took from the bundle two or three of them, and told the man he was talking to, that he might read them ; and which he did take and open, and (as the person present believes) did read them to himself. And the said Sir Watkin Lewis is more especially suspected of being concerned in the said felony, because he who hath long been publicly accused, and stands unvindicated, is a more suspicious character than he who hath never been accused ; and because the same disposition that could incline him to carry the deed to market might by the gradations of wickedness easily conduct him from fraud to felony. A person is now

in London who hath seen the said registers, and can prove they have undergone a felonious mutilation. A person is also living who hath acknowledged the custody of the mutilated parts of such registers; and who hath declared that on certain conditions they could all be produced. Letters anterior and subsequent to the death of the said Lewis James, &c. the clerk of Painter, the agent, who saw the mutilated parts of the most material entries of the family, and the person who heard him own the having seen them, are both living. A person now in London says it is a prevailing and credited report, that about two or three years ago two of Painter's clerks (with a strange person to assist them) spent several days in examining different parish registers and collecting all the information they could about the Selby family above the hills, and that during such search they lodged two or three nights at the house of the said Lewis James, near thirty miles distant from Pembroke, where Painter lives. And it seems not a little wonderful, that Painter in a continued agency, near twenty years, should not acquaint his client the defendant, Lowndes Selby, with any of these occurrences; and also some very remarkable traditional reports relative to the Selby family, which have been the renewed and universal subject of conversation through the county, almost ever since the testator's death; and yet all these very striking circumstances are asserted by the defendant's answer, never to have reached him. Save and except by the bill, the very name of Lewis James is quite strange to him; and it could scarcely have been more wonderful if he had actually denied the agency (which he found himself constrained to admit) since he hath in effect declared that the said agent, for near twenty years constant agency, had collected no information or communicated none to him.

The son of Lewis James hath likewise declared since his father's death, that he hath still in his custody a large writing, which of itself would effect the purpose of recovering the estate, but which he would deliver to the defendant Lowndes Selby, rather than to any person concerned for the plaintiffs; and what countenances this assertion is, that his late father, a few months before his death, did, in the presence of three or four persons, produce a large paper or parchment writing (to a Mr. Jones with whom he was conversing on the claim to the Selby estate) and said, "this is the thing that will alone do the business:" whereupon
Mr.

Mr. Jones desired to read it; and Mrs. James also desired her husband that he would let Mr. Jones see it: to which he answered his wife, "No, my dear, I love you very well, but I love this better;" and drew it back without suffering any part of it to be read: whence it is apprehended that the deceased Lewis James was made the tool of the defendants, Sir Watkin Lewes and Lowndes Selby, to do and execute such felonious matters as they, and even the agent, Painter, were afraid to enter upon; nor doth it seem unlikely, that the large writing the said Lewis James produced, and his son lately declared to have in his custody, is the old Latin deed placed with the said Lewis James. The defendants, Sir Watkin Lewes and William Lowndes Selby, and Painter, the agent, thinking it unsafe to have the custody of it, and equally unsafe to destroy what they knew had been partly read by several persons, and that the said Lewis James finding that he had been made a dupe of, and that his danger far exceeded his expectations of further advantage; in such a state of despair, it is no wonder that the last *fruits* (as he termed it) should prove by far the bitterest he ever tasted; and perhaps Sir Watkin Lewes may very soon perceive that the visible decay of the stock gives indications that his future crops will be blighted.

If an attorney cannot be excused from giving evidence, under pretence of not disclosing his client's secrets, when the subject of investigation shall be indisputably shewn to be criminal; then on examining Lowndes Selby's agent and clerks, the son and widow of Lewis James, and a few others, it is predicted that all the defendant Lowndes Selby's overstrained negatives will be discovered.

The exercise of senatorial privilege, for the purpose of sedition and stifling his fraudulent practices, is such an unexampled instance of depravity, that nothing so opprobrious it is apprehended ever occurred before. It is not only a perversion and abuse of that wise and salutary provision for preserving the great and important concerns of the nation uninterrupted, but it is an insult to the honour and dignity of the illustrious members of that honourable House: but whether he hath dared set his foot in a British senate whilst he is marked with the hateful and seditious badge of a rebel, is not known.

From the present gloomy aspect and felonious ingenuities of this daring combination, nothing can be so little difficult as to perceive who had most reason to apprehend the practice of *Forgery* and *Fabrication*, mentioned in the original
undenied

undenied pamphlet, to have been suggested by the confederacy as an anticipated accusation against the claimants, especially when it is recollected that in a crowd none bawl out stop thief louder than the thieves themselves; and whatever mock suits or deceptions may have been practised by the defendant William Lowndes Selby to obscure and confound the truth, the plaintiffs too much revere their superiors to dare insult an honourable court with a mere mockery and fiction; but this is a real unfeigned suit, founded on the judgment of gentlemen of great eminence in the profession (one of whom advised and drew the bill) who are of opinion, that notwithstanding all the wicked artifices, conducted with all the depths of subtilty for near twenty years, to shut out and bar the right of the plaintiff's deceased father, and now of the plaintiffs themselves, yet that their title still remains good and unimpaired; and that none of the measures which have been taken can, under the peculiarity of this case, operate to their prejudice, or any way affect their right.

The most judicious and respectable parts of the community have very recently concurred in opinion of the superior wisdom and excellence of the laws and constitution of this nation, to any other form of government for the Protection of Property and for the personal safety of individuals; and have testified their abhorrence of Sedition, and their resolution to enforce due Obedience to the laws of their country. On such authority it is reasonable to imagine, that the laws have provided a remedy for grievances of so oppressive a kind as the foregoing case exhibits; and whence it is ardently hoped that no species of sedition can escape with impunity.

From these considerations, I John Duffield, at No. 6, Gray-street, Manchester-square, Gent. for, and on the behalf of the plaintiffs, having thus opened their case, most humbly beg leave to assure the public, that though they have many relations who are desirous to assist them, yet they are neither individually or collectively of ability to prosecute the suit with effect, against such an unbounded source of opulence; and are in danger of being overpowered by their own actual property; as the register destroying agency, the delicious *First Fruits* of Lewis James, the waste paper traffic with Sir Watkin Lewes, the matchless treachery of John Lloyd, &c. &c. leave no room to doubt that large sums have already been lavishly squandered
amongst

amongst different hireling prostitutes, for the purpose of oppressing and robbing, as well the plaintiffs late father, as themselves; and as every benevolent mind would rejoice to see violence and oppression stopt in the full career of success, and the insolence of daring villany repressed, I presume (on the plaintiffs behalf) with the utmost humility, reverence, and respect, to pray the subscriptions of the generous public to enable them to recover their just right; for without some friendly aids, sufficient to curb the devouring voracity of a cormorant, a vulture, or a griffin, they must inevitably fall a prey to unrestrained rapacity.

Mr. Brooks of Milman-street, Bedford-row, their solicitor, hath proposed each subscriber, on payment of a subscription to Mr.

Cochran Apothecary No 8 Wood Street Carnaby Market (who is so kind as to receive the same) be requested to write his or her name, and place of abode, with the sum subscribed against it, and to take a receipt, that the plaintiffs may have, as well the pleasure of returning the kind loan, when enabled so to do, as the happiness of testifying (in any event) their gratitude to their respective benefactors, which they are confident can never end but with their days. And with respect to the mode of drawing as occasion may require, he proposes to request a clerk in court to view and examine a statement of the costs incurred, and a computation or estimate of the probable expence of the measures which are about to be provided for; and that he be so kind as to join his signature with the said solicitors, to every such draft which from time to time may be drawn on the said

Mr Cochran

payable to the said solicitor.

JOHN DUFFIELD.

No. 6, Gray-street, Manchester-Square, May, 1793.

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